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18 March 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: ADP in the Editorial and Publication Divisions, Office of Basic and Geographic Intelligence, 18 January 1968

PRESENT:

25X1A9a [redacted]

OBJECTIVE:

To consider the role of ADP in the Editorial and Publication Divisions, OBGI

DISCUSSION:

25X1A9a 1. [redacted] opened the meeting by summarizing the efforts of Cartography, Geography, and Map Library Divisions toward automation. Development of ADP applications has not always progressed smoothly but has received setbacks from lack of desired accuracy in the case of map plotters and from the sheer magnitude of the task of converting to automated equipment as in the use of aperture cards in map filing and reference.

25X1A9a 2. [redacted] asked to bring the group up to date on the EPIC program, said that about 10% of the NIS is now being produced through EPIC. It is hoped that the proportion produced through

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the EPIC system will be steadily increased. Contributors in five non-USIB offices have been supplied tape punching machines, and OSI, OCI, and two offices in Commerce are beginning to submit contributions on tape. DIA has not yet begun producing contributions on tape although print-outs have been used for weather and climate tables on several recent NIS. Plans call for eventually putting all NIS production into the EPIC system. Full development of the system would require submission of all contributions on tape, but DIA is having difficulties which stem in part from budgetary problems. The Chief, Printing Services Division, is planning personnel shifts to prepare for the full use of the EPIC system for the NIS. He will need fewer keyboard operators and proof readers, and expects to retrain surplus personnel for other work.

25X1A9a 3. [redacted] stated that in some respects DIA was ahead of OBGI in the use of ADP. DIA has been working for several years on a data bank of beach information from which beach tables can be prepared as ADP print-outs. There may be some difficulty in preparing beach tables in a form suitable for use by high level planners in the NIS, but this can undoubtedly be worked out and made compatible
25X1A9a with the EPIC system. [redacted] indicated that he had looked into this with OCS. DIA's output is not in the format that OBGI is now using, and adjustments in NIS outlines might be needed to facilitate use of ADP. He is looking toward having copy for weather and climate tables submitted on tape, a step in which DIA has indicated a full willingness to cooperate.

25X1A9a 4. [redacted] stated that DIA has gone farther than any other producer in using the data bank approach. The problem of developing equipment to store basic intelligence and keep it updated ready for the production of an "instant NIS," however, has not been solved and may well take another ten years. This is a community-wide problem and not peculiar to OBGI.

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5. There was considerable discussion initiated by [redacted] concerning the need for a common data bank that would provide essentially all the information needed to produce basic intelligence. He would have the data bank accessible to ED/OBGI so that editors could verify contributions and could redo the contributor's research, but it was pointed out by others that this is not and never has been ED's mission in the NIS. Ideally, the data banks in OER, OCI, etc., would be so organized that an "instant NIS" could be retrieved by pushing a button; this involves careful programming the material into the data banks,
25X1A9a and [redacted] felt that OBGI should have a voice in the setting up
25X1A9a of these banks. [redacted] suggested that the NIS outline furnishes a suitable framework for organizing basic intelligence material in a data bank.

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6. [redacted] commented that for weather and climate, for example, a contributor needing a table for a particular NIS Area covering a certain period of years and in a specific format, should be able to get a tape run to these specifications from the data bank. The contributor might then want to delete or rearrange some of the statistics but would forward the basic tape for reproduction through EPIC. This type of procedure can readily be applied to data for beach tables and other statistically heavy topics. [redacted] 25X1A9a pointed out that the concept of instant basic intelligence was what put the JANIS out of business. The basis for the SID, as originally proposed about 1946, was that it would have a file folder for each topic for each area and that these would be maintained up to date ready to send to the printer at any instant. This is fine if all the desired content is present in every folder and is written up as finished intelligence rather than just a collection of related documents; someone has to make sense out of the material going into each folder and put it into digestable form. (Essentially the same problem would apply to the data bank and the concept of the "instant NIS.")

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7. [redacted] stated that the advantages of the EPIC system were strictly to the printer and in many ways the system creates additional problems for the editors. [redacted] 25X1A9a pointed out that there is a dollar and manpower savings for the printer. [redacted] 25X1A9a added that for statistical data especially there is editorial economy in being able to process from data sources through all stages to the printed copy on tape, because the fewer times such material is transcribed the fewer errors are introduced and the lighter the proofreading load.

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Summarization by [redacted]

1. The EPIC system is a sound system for printing the NIS but is now operational to only a limited degree. Efforts should be pressed to obtain full efficiency by striving for the planned 100% customer tape production of NIS contributions, because short of this we are missing some of the savings we should have. The EPIC system shows no serious problems though there are minor difficulties to be resolved. It is an excellent concept.

2. The divisions were asked what their needs are in ADP training. Do the divisions possess adequate potential leadership in problems relating to ADP for the next 10 to 15 years, or will they be hard pressed to cope with problems that ADP would engender?

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[redacted] stated that PD is selecting 1 or 2 persons keep abreast of ADP problems through attendance at conferences, courses, and exhibits in their fields of interest.

25X1A9a [redacted] expressed the view that in ED the Intelligence Officer should be trained as a Systems Analyst in order to be able to design systems to use the machine. [redacted] 25X1A9a
25X1A9a considered that [redacted] proposal transcended the needs of ED. Editorial Division proposes to train several persons from each branch in basic knowledge of ADP through the ADP orientation course provided by the Agency; 1 or 2 from each branch will be nominated for the Executive Seminar in ADP (provided by Civil Service) and the Executive Workshop in ADP Programming (also provided by Civil Service). The policy in Editorial Division is to keep abreast of broad developments in the field through generalized courses rather than to seek specialized training. [redacted] strongly 25X1A9a believes that training for ADP on an intensive or specialized basis should be the responsibility of the front office rather than a divisional function.

25X1A9a 3. [redacted] concluded by expressing his appreciation to the group for a worthwhile discussion that had given him a better understanding of the problems faced.

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[redacted]
Deputy Director
Basic and Geographic Intelligence

Distribution:
1 - each attendee
2 - OD/BGI
25X1A9a OBGI: [redacted]mjc/3595(18 Mar 68)